

Mom got suicide advice

Daughter's book details efforts to end suffering

NEW YORK — (AP) — Former television reporter Betty Rollin says in a new book that she secretly conducted research to help her terminally ill mother commit suicide two years ago.

Rollin said her role in the drug overdose death of Ida Rollin, 75, in her Manhattan apartment did not violate a state law against "promoting suicide."

"I did not directly help my mother to commit suicide," the former ABC and NBC reporter said Monday. "If I did, I would not have written a book about it."

"I did research, and I gave my mother the information [about how to commit suicide]," she said. "That's not a crime."

In the book, *Last Wish*, Rollin explains how her mother, after months of torturous and apparently futile chemotherapy for inoperable ovarian cancer, expressed the desire to end her own life.

"This isn't life" and "I want to die more than anything in the world," Ida Rollin was quoted as

saying.

Rollin wrote that after many conversations with evasive and fearful physicians, she contacted an elderly American doctor living in the Netherlands. He suggested a dosage of Nembutal, a potent sedative, combined with Compazine, a depressant, to be taken with club soda.

The unidentified doctor also told Rollin to stay with her mother for two hours after she took the pills, but to leave the apartment at that point and arrange for the body to be found by someone else.

"If everything goes smoothly, the doctor will write on the death certificate that your mother died of natural causes," he said. "If there's a suspicion of suicide, there'll be an investigation. You don't want that."

Those words "got me thinking about what I hadn't thought about since the beginning, what I still didn't want to think about — that we were probably about to commit a crime," she wrote.

Rollin said Monday that before writing the book, she consulted a lawyer, who told her she had done nothing illegal.

A book reviewer in The Washington Post said some "legal authorities ... could see Rollin's book as a confession of murder."

"I can't imagine anybody calling me a murderer if they read the book," Rollin responded. "I never brought [suicide] up. I never encouraged it. All I did was provide information. It was her act, her wish."

And when Ida Rollin swallowed the pills, "I didn't even touch her," she said.

But after Ida Rollin mumbled her last words, the "whole suicide business," which often seemed unreal, crashed down on her daughter.

"The cement that has been holding me together begins to crack," she writes. "I stumble backwards, collapse into a chair, and with both hands clamped over my mouth, I sob. I sob heavily, but not for long. Because when I look up and see how still she is, I know that she has found the door she was looking for ..."

Although Betty Rollin's husband picked up the pills and took them to his mother-in-law's



Betty Rollin: Defends actions in mother's death.

apartment, the pills were prescribed by Ida Rollin's physician at her request.

Had it not been for her daughter, who wrote scores of pages describing the difficulties of finding out how to commit suicide, could Ida Rollin have ended her life?

"Oh yes," Betty Rollin said. "She was intelligent and determined."

Under New York state law, "promoting suicide" is a felony punishable by up to four years in prison. The law defines promoting suicide as "intentionally causing or aiding another person to attempt to commit suicide."

Burnham's Body Be Embalmed

GEORGETOWN—The body of the late President Forbes Burnham was flown to Russia to be embalmed. After embal-

ment the body will be returned to Guyana and entombed for permanent viewing.

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Roland Peterson To Be Aruba's First Police Commissioner

ORANJESTAD—During a MEP congress held Sunday in the Palm Beach Room of the Holiday Inn Hotel, MEP General Secretary, Mr. Nelson Oduber announced that Police

Inspector Roland Peterson will be Aruba's first Police Commissioner when Aruba obtains Status Aparte on January 1, 1986.

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Musicians' instruments reveal their personalities

THE instruments musicians play reflect their personalities, according to a new study.

Drummers, for example, tend to be loud and boisterous, while harpists are quiet and withdrawn, say psychologists Jack Lipton of Union College in Schenectady, N.Y., and R. Scott Bullock of Columbia University in New York City.

The two researchers asked the members of 11 symphony orchestras to describe the personalities of each section in the orchestra.

The brass players were considered to be, like their horns, bold and brazen; the horn players were also described as self-assured.

Woodwind players — clarinetists, and flautists — were seen as quiet, conscientious and intelligent individuals who tended to be a bit fussy.

Violinists, harpists and other players of stringed instruments were viewed as nonathletic, and perhaps a bit stuffy. They considered themselves the most important part of the orchestra, the study said.

Percussionists were easy to get along with, often being described as the life of the party, fun-loving and witty. But some musicians also called them unintelligent and insensitive. Not surprisingly, percussionists were also described as the most hard of hearing.